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Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 23 | Min 22 | Humidity 94% Heavy Rain Sensex 79,802 | Nifty 24,131 | Gold 76,400 | Silver 88,930 | Dollar 84.56 | Euro 89.34 | GBP 107.64

FARM WIN

City researchers develop innovative farming system using AI and machine learning that aims to reduce water usage by 60%

PAGE 4

PATIENT SHORTAGE

Review by BBMP Health Department reveals many Namma Clinics in city are receiving fewer than 10 patients a day

PAGE 6

169: The number of trees proposed to be felled over last couple of weeks for various infra projects. Tussle between development & environment continues even as green cover rapidly depletes

DOUBLE EDGE OF THE AXE

Service road for air show, maternity ward at govt hospital among proposed projects

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Over the last couple of weeks, nearly 200 trees in Bengaluru have been proposed to be felled to make way for various infrastructure and development projects.

As per the forest department of the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), multiple agencies, through two different public notices, have sought permission to remove 169 trees across the city.

These projects include the construction of a service road for the upcoming Aero show and a maternity ward at a government hospital.

The National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) has filed the first application to build a service road of nearly 12 kilometres in length by removing 66 trees standing on the premises of the Air Force, Yelahanka.

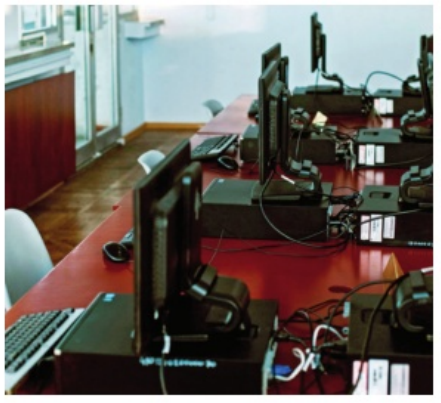
In a letter sent to BBMP, NHAI stated that the service road is required to avoid traffic congestion and for smooth movement of traffic during the Aero India show, likely to be held in February 2025.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

"It is ironic that permission seeking the removal of trees for an annual event is being sought by agencies such as NHAI. The Tree Expert Committee should dismiss the application
— Tree activist

Kannadigas lured abroad to scam their own

Cybercrime networks exploit local language skills to trap victims



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It is common for local language speakers to be employed in roles that require interaction with people from their region. Unfortunately, fraudsters are now using that tactic to deceive locals. Individuals from Karnataka are being recruited by scam networks in Laos to target and defraud Kannadigas.

Police officials said that the lure of high-paying overseas jobs, without adequate verification, is leading many unemployed youth into dangerous situations. Cybercrime networks are enticing these individuals with lucrative offers, only to trap them in illegal call centre operations.

Many victims, particularly those with strong communication skills, are unknowingly becoming part of these schemes. The issue came to light when a youth narrowly escaped such a trap and exposed the ordeal. The victim, enticed by the promise of a monthly salary of ₹60,000, ended up working for a cyber scam operation. He was taken from Mysuru and forced to participate in online fraud targeting Indian citizens. Under the guise of a foreign job, he was flown to Laos, where he became part of an

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

2 THINGS TO DO

01 Sky lantern festival

For the first time in Bengaluru, Day Dreamers presents Sky Lantern Festival—DJ Music Concert at Utsavaa Resort, Electronic City. With top DJs and four hours of non-stop music in an open-air lawn with lit-up sky lanterns, the concert has everything from massive stage setups to special effects to wide food and bar counters and even photo booths and goodies counters. **Where: Utsavaa Resort, Electronic City; When: December 7, 6 pm onwards**

02 Christmas circus

From dazzling Christmas dances to gravity-defying gymnasts, this Christmas circus show has it all. From a sensational hologram show—a first in India—to foot juggling and bounce juggling masters, this show has it all. You'll also witness graceful aerial silk performers spinning magic, the adrenaline-pumping Wheel of Death. Christmas clowns that will make you laugh till you catch your sides. **Where: Olympian Circus, JP Nagar; When: December 2 to 8, 4 pm and 7 pm**

Roboticon 2024 concludes

Manipal Hospital Old Airport Road, Bengaluru, hosted Roboticon 2024, focussing on robotic spine surgery. The event was led by Dr S Vidyadhara, Chairman and HOD, Spine Surgery & Consultant, Robotic Spine Surgery, with 335 surgeons from India and other countries participating. The event included live robotic spine surgeries along with real-time commentary from surgeons and panel discussions. Dr H Sudarshan Ballal, Chairman of Manipal Hospitals, addressed the conference, stating that integrating robotics in spine care changes how spinal diseases are diagnosed and treated, enhancing surgical precision and outcomes. Dilip Jose, MD and CEO of Manipal Health Enterprises Pvt Ltd highlighted the challenges of unequal access to quality medical care in India. — BMB

Hesaraghatta grasslands: One hidden treasure of biodiversity

Walk into grasslands organised by ATREE reveals overlooked wonders of ecosystem, stresses on its critical role in biodiversity, human civilisation

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Last month, this habitat got declared as 'Greater Hesaraghatta Conservation Reserve' Pic credits: Dr Seshadri KS

The Hesaraghatta grasslands, one of the last surviving stretches near Bengaluru, have long been at the centre of a tug-of-war between conservationists and development. Conservationists have tirelessly campaigned to preserve this unique ecosystem, and just last month, the State Board for Wildlife approved a proposal to declare nearly 5,000 hectares of this habitat as the 'Greater Hesarghatta Conservation Reserve'. The proposal was submitted in 2013, by conservationists Mahesh Bhat, Late Ramki Srinivasan, and Dr Seshadri KS. Meanwhile, misguided attempts to plant saplings here have often disrupted the delicate balance of this unique biome, highlighting a lack of understanding about the significance of grassland ecosystems.

To shed light on this often-overlooked habitat, the Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE) organised the TN Khoshoo Memorial Walk on Saturday. Led by experts Dr R Ganesan (senior fellow, ATREE) and Dr Seshadri KS (fellow in residence, ATREE), the nature walk was an engaging dive into the wonders of the grassland ecosystem, stressing its critical role in biodiversity and human civilisation. Contrary to the misconception that grasslands are wastelands, they are thriving hubs for diverse species of birds, insects, and animals, many of which are intricately adapted to this habitat.

Walk through hidden world

Participants were treated to an eye-opening journey that unveiled the complex web of life thriving in the grasslands. For instance, the encounter of hare droppings sparked a fascinating discussion. Did you know that hares eat their own faeces? This behaviour, known as coprophagy, allows them to extract essential nutrients from tough plant fibers. Symbiotic bacteria in their digestive systems break down these fibres into vital proteins and vitamins, a process crucial for their survival. As the group ventured further, they encountered frothy mucus-like masses on plants. Far from being spit, these were the protective homes of spittlebugs. Hidden inside these frothy shelters, spittlebug nymphs stay safe from predators, enjoy a humid microclimate and remain shielded from rain. These bubbles, painstakingly crafted, are nature's ingenious safe houses.

Secret life of parasites and architects

The grasslands also revealed the fascinating strategy of root parasites, plants that sniff out host species through chemical signals in the air or soil. Members of the Orobanchaceae family, for example, latch onto host roots to siphon nutrients, showcasing nature's relentless will to survive. Nearby, the experts turned their attention to towering ant hills—seemingly ordinary but home to extraordinary activity. These intricate structures are bustling metropolises of termites, complete with their own social hierarchy. Worker termites toil ceaselessly, while the queen, the sole reproducer, reigns supreme.

Microcosm of grasslands

The grasslands teemed with vibrant life at every turn. Blue pansy butterflies flitted gracefully, while rattlepod moths added a splash of intrigue. Experts shared insights that centipedes, among the ancient survivors from the Gondwana age, still thrive here, with some of their closest relatives now found in Australia—indicating that the two distant land masses were once connected. Birds, too, find sanctuary in the grasslands, with sightings of egrets and grey babblers reminding everyone of the fragile beauty of this ecosystem.

Call to protect

The Hesaraghatta grasslands are more than just an expanse of greenery. In fact, they are a treasure trove of biodiversity, a cradle for life that dates back millions of years. It is also a critically important grazing land for the local community. Protecting this landscape as a conservation reserve will ensure water security as well as access to fodder. Preserving such habitats is not just an ecological imperative but a journey into understanding the intricate and awe-inspiring world of nature.

Walkfest to find obstacle-free and walkable footpaths in B'luru

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Over 150 people braved the rain on Sunday morning to participate in a unique "Military City" themed walk organised as part of the ongoing Walkfest by Bengaluru Walks. Covering 9.5 kilometres and 12,500 steps, participants explored the history of Bengaluru's military heritage across Old Airport Road, Domlur, 100-feet Road, Old Madras Road, and Ulsoor.

The event was curated by Arun Pai, founder of Bengaluru Walks, who has planned 100 kilometres of daily walks on Bengaluru's footpaths from December 1 to 15. These walks, themed around different aspects of the city, aim to showcase '100km of walkable, interconnected footpaths' while promoting the concept of Obstacle-Free Footpaths (OFF).

"Today's theme was Military City. We started at 7 am from Trinity Metro Station, and participants included MLA (Member of Legislative Assembly) Harris (Shantinagar), DCP (Deputy Commissioner of Police) Traffic East Kuldeep, and the BBMP (Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike) engineering team. The BMRCL (Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Limited) also supported us at the metro station. The idea is to show people that Bengaluru does have footpaths one can walk on, and walking on them is not a challenge," shared Pai. Participants were encouraged to rate the footpaths they walked on through a 'Citizen Rating of Footpaths' initiative.

The Walkfest includes themes like Aerospace City, Incredible Indiranagar, Historic Halasuru, Colonial Cantonment, Sports and the City, Sir M Visvesvaraya's Dream, Palace Pradakshine, Magical Malleswaram, and Joyful Jayanagar. Each walk begins at 7 am from a designated metro station and covers at least 10,000 steps over two hours. "We've selected the best footpaths across Bengaluru for these walks. This is not just about fitness; it's about reclaiming our footpaths and making them accessible for all," said Pai.

The MLA also came forward to ask people to discuss the civic problems that could be rectified. The walks are free and open to all ages, with prior registration required. With its blend of heritage, fitness, and civic awareness, Walkfest by Bengaluru Walks offers Bengalureans a fresh way to connect with their city.

Dangerous gap ahead: Branch out, motorists

Citizens place tree branch to warn motorists of danger due to caved-in portion of culvert in Vajarahalli, while authorities dilly-dally

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There is no end in sight for culvert and drain issues on Vajarahalli Road and surrounding areas in Yeshwanthpur Assembly, making it evident that neither the Bengaluru Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) authorities nor the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) is keen on fixing the problems. Residents of nearby areas have no options but to affix temporary caution signs for motorists.

In the past, they have used a scarecrow -- Bangalore Mirror had written about Bangalore City Municipal Corporation Layout residents using a scarecrow at a culvert to caution motorists. But till now no help has come. "The authorities are yet to solve this problem even after two months. I appeal to the authorities to replace the broken concrete slabs on the culvert to avoid road accidents," said Dharmendra P, Secretary of Bangalore City Municipal Corporation Layout Residents' Association.

Now, the residents of Vajarahalli and surrounding areas have kept a tree branch at the BWSSB valve chamber near the culvert on Vajarahalli 100 Ft Road. The residents said a small portion of the road adjacent to the valve chamber is caved in.

"I have complained to the BWSSB assistant executive engineer but nothing has been done," said Kiran Kumar, Joint Secretary, Change Makers of Kanakapura Road.

VK Srivatsa, Secretary of Change Makers of Kanakapura Road, said the caved in portion is dangerous. A resident on the condition of anonymity said the unscientific construction of the valve chambers is the main cause for these problems. "The height of chambers is higher than the surface of the road. The quality of material used to fill around the chamber is poor," he said. BWSSB Assistant Executive Engineer Sandeep told BM he would fix the problem in a week. "I have received a complaint from the residents on the condition of the valve chamber. I will fix it," he said.

Awareness drives to cut crime

Police focus on issues such as drug abuse among youth, traffic violations, cyber frauds

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As a step towards prevention of crime, including drug abuse among youth, traffic violations, and underage driving, the South Division police launched a special awareness drive from November 29 to December 1.

The initiative was based on feedback received during the Janasamparka Divas held on November 23, where residents voiced their concerns about increasing safety issues.

A team comprising an Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) and three constables visited public spaces and schools, colleges, college hostels, slum areas and also connected with apartment associations, to educate citizens about safety measures and crime prevention.

The campaign aimed to address issues such as cyber fraud, traffic violations, and the dangers of underage driving.

Young people are often more vulnerable to manipulation and lack awareness about the dangers of drug abuse, making them susceptible to such influences, police officials said.

To address this issue, authorities have expanded their awareness campaigns to include places where youth are more likely to be exposed to these risks.

"In hostels, there are times when wardens are not present, leading to reduced supervision. This makes them a critical focus area for our awareness initiatives," a police official told BM.

These efforts aim to educate youngsters and create a sense of vigilance and promote safer spaces, he said.

During the sessions, officers shared real-life examples of cybercrime cases, urging the public not to respond to unknown calls or messages.

They also emphasised on the importance of helpline numbers 112 and 1930, which are operational round-the-clock to assist citizens in emergencies.

Underage driving

Police officials stressed on the importance of adhering to legal driving age requirements. Parents were urged to ensure that minors wait until they turn 18 and possess a valid driver's licence before operating vehicles.

Crime prevention month

December has been identified as 'Crime Prevention Month,' with efforts underway to extend awareness initiatives on a larger scale.

Police officials noted that the festive season, particularly around New Year, often sees a rise in drug-related crimes and substance abuse, prompting the launch of this preventive drive.

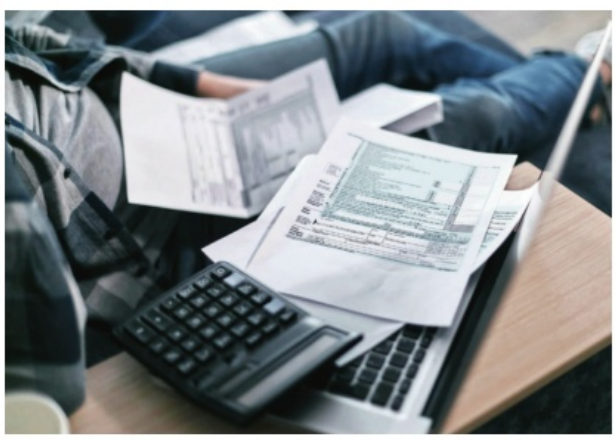
"December is identified as Crime Prevention Month and it serves as a reminder to reduce crime. Hence this awareness shall continue with more public awareness and ensuring safety," said a police official.

BM Finance Fundas

 # FDI rise: FDI in India rose by 45% year-on-year to $29.79 billion in April-September this fiscal, govt data shows

EPF UAN: Do you need to activate UAN every time you change jobs?

The Ministry of Labour and Employment has directed the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) to work in a campaign mode with employers and ensure the activation of the Universal Account Number (UAN) of employees, the ministry said in a release on November 21.



EPFO online services not available without active UAN. Here's how to activate it

According to the release, "In the first stage, employers are required to complete the process of UAN activation through Aadhaar-based OTP for all their employees joining in the current nancial year by 30th November 2024, starting with the latest joinees. They must then complete the process for all employees working with them.."

Who doesn't need to activate UAN on EPFO portal?

According to the EPFO's social media post on X (formerly Twitter), "Employees are not required to generate a new UAN when leaving their old employment. A member cannot have more than one UAN. There is no requirement for having a fresh UAN at all, in any case of unemployment or change of employment." — socialepfo (@socialepfo)

In case of two allotted UANs, an employee should transfer all the previous services linked with previous UANs to present UAN through One Member One EPF Account facility on the EPFO portal.

How to activate UAN on EPFO portal

The activation process can be completed using an Aadhaar-based OTP (One-Time Password). Employers should ensure that their employees activate the UAN by following the steps given below:

Step 1: Go to EPFO Member Portal.

Step 2: Click on the "Activate UAN" link under "Important Links".

Step 3: Enter UAN, Aadhaar number, name, DOB, and Aadhaar-linked mobile number.

Step 4: Employees should ensure their mobile number is Aadhaar-linked to access the full range of EPFO's digital services

Step 5: Agree to Aadhaar OTP verication.

Step 6: Click "Get Authorization PIN" to receive an OTP on your Aadhaar-linked mobile number.

Step 7: Enter the OTP to complete the activation

A password will be sent to your registered mobile number upon successful activation.

What is UAN?

UAN (Universal Account Number) is a unique 12 digit number allotted to a member. It is a permanent number and it remains valid throughout the life of a member. It does not change with the change of employment. UAN helps in

automatic transfer of Funds and PF withdrawals.

– Sneha Kulkarni, ET Online

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Smart farming: Agriculture with AI-powered automation

Researchers develop AutoGrow, automated system that simplifies farming, addresses water scarcity and labour shortages, & makes it accessible to all

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A team of researchers in the city have developed an innovative farming system called AutoGrow, designed to revolutionise agriculture through artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML). This fully automated system enables plants to grow with minimal human intervention, offering a sustainable and efficient solution for areas facing water scarcity and labour shortages.

AutoGrow is built around the principle of wick irrigation, a method that reduces water usage by up to 60% compared to traditional drip and flood irrigation systems. It features three configurations: vertical setups, nutrient film techniques, and open-grow farming. "We are conducting case studies in these setups to analyse plant growth and other factors, all of which are controlled and monitored through an AI and ML-powered analysis engine," explained Pavan Patil, GM Lab-Admin at the Institute of Information Technology Bangalore (IIIT-B).

The team includes Pavan Patil, Phani Pavan (MS by Research), and Professor Ramesh Kestur from the Department of Data Science and Artificial Intelligence (DSAI), IIIT-B. They aim to empower individuals, especially women, to take up farming in their backyards and terraces, enabling them to grow leafy vegetables like lettuce with ease. AutoGrow is completely automated, requiring minimal human effort. "Once the seeds are sown, the system takes care of the entire process, from watering to nutrient delivery. The AI-powered system notifies users when the crops are ready for harvest. This makes it highly beneficial in water-scarce areas and regions with labour shortages," Patil said.

AutoGrow encourages sustainable practices and urban farming

> "Once seeds are sown, system takes care of process, from watering to nutrient delivery. AI notifies when crops are ready – Pavan P, IIT-B

The system is equipped with an AI and ML-powered analysis engine that collects and analyses data from sensors installed in the setups. "We have uploaded predetermined data to the analysis engine, and it is now in the process of analysing it. This data-driven approach helps the system make decisions, such as opening and closing water valves automatically," Patil added. The team has already achieved significant milestones. "We have grown two sets of lettuce leafy vegetables using the system," Patil confirmed. AutoGrow's patented technology ensures its uniqueness and protects it from duplication. "It's already patented, and nobody can copy it. We are now progressing toward gathering more data to improve the analysis engine," Patil explained.

Setting up the system is quick and straightforward, requiring just three days if all equipment is available. The growth period for plants depends on their specific requirements, making the system versatile for different crops. It is particularly ideal for home gardens and urban farming, where individuals can grow their fresh produce.

The technology holds immense potential for transforming agriculture. By automating irrigation, nutrient delivery, and monitoring, AutoGrow minimises resource use while maximising yields. The system is user-friendly, allowing anyone to farm without prior expertise. "The AI and ML programs stored in the analysis engine analyse data and make decisions, ensuring optimal plant growth," Patil added.

The researchers pointed out that AutoGrow not only addresses critical challenges like water scarcity and labour shortages but also encourages sustainable practices and urban farming. With its simplicity and efficiency, the system can make farming accessible to everyone, empowering communities to cultivate their own fresh and healthy produce.

No more detours: ITI gate reopens for students

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After a four-year struggle by students and parents, Indian Telephone Industries (ITI) Limited reopened one of its gates on Saturday, which had been closed during the lockdown. The reopening provides much-needed relief to the students of ITI Central School and Vidyamandir Group of Institutions. For the past four years, students from KR Puram have struggled to attend school on time, as the closure forced them to take a two-kilometre detour to reach their institutions.

Residents had been appealing to authorities, including elected representatives, the KR Puram Tahsildar, and ITI management, to reopen the gate for the benefit of students, but their efforts were in vain. Social organisations also wrote letters to ITI Limited, but no action was taken. KR Puram MLA Byrathi Basavaraj attended the reopening ceremony and distributed sweets to the students. "We approached the elected representatives, including Bengaluru North MP Shobha Karandlaje, requesting to take measures to open the gate. There was a footpath or a trail before the land was acquired for ITI Limited. The authorities allowed parents and students to enter the gate to reach the school till Covid-19 lockdown. The ITI management closed the gate as a safety measure during the lockdown but it failed to reopen it after the lockdown was lifted," said Krishna Kumar, a resident.

Venugopal, a resident, expressed that the reopening of the gate brings great relief and assistance to him and his two children, who attend ITI Vidyamandir School. "With the closure of the gate, we were compelled to make a two-km detour to reach the school. It was very tough for us to commute on the main road that was congested with traffic. We used to stage protests demanding the ITI management open the gate and allow the public to use the trail earmarked by revenue authorities," said Venugopal.

Appreciating the ITI Limited and those responsible for reopening the gate, Balaji Raghotham, a lake activist, said that he was a past pupil of ITI Vidyamandira School. "Reopening of the gate is a great relief for hundreds of students from KR Puram and nearby areas. It not only ensures the safety of students but also saves a lot of time," he said, adding that.

The ITI Limited has put up a notice board at the entrance of the gate stating that the gate is one-way and open for restricted hours only for entry/exit of the school children of ITI Central School and Vidyamandir Group of Institutions and the general public is not allowed to use the gate. The board specifies the following timings: Morning from 8 am to 9:30 am, and afternoon from 3 pm to 4 pm. Parents and their children attending ITI Central School or Vidyamandir Group of Institutions are permitted to use two-wheelers during these hours. Any violation of these rules will result in the permanent closure of the gate.

KR Puram MLA distributing sweets

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9591233247
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Slab hazard
Richmond Road

A missing slab at the Richmond Road-Brunton Road intersection has remained unrepaired for months, creating a serious safety hazard.

Road woes
Sanjaynagar

The road near the BWSSB office in Sanjaynagar is in poor condition, causing commuters to face daily challenges.

Path blockade
OMBR Layout

A luxury car dealership near CMR College often parks vehicles on the footpath along 4th Main Road, OMBR Layout, blocking pedestrian access.

Mahadevapura zone tops BBMP tax collection chart

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In the first eight months of the financial year, Mahadevapura zone has once again topped the list as the highest contributor to BBMP's (Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike) tax collection, accounting for 1,148.35 crore. This means around 26.81% of the total BBMP's revenue is contributed by the Mahadevapura zone. Following Mahadevapura, the East Zone stands as the second-largest contributor with 710.31 crore, adding 16.58% to the BBMP's kitty. The South zone secures the third position with 606.48 crore, contributing 14.15% to the total tax collection.

According to the statistics provided by BBMP, Bommanahalli and West Zone follow closely, contributing 418.78 crore (9.78%) and 483.67 crore (11.29%), respectively. Yelahanka also plays a significant role by adding 408.29 crore, making up 9.53% of the total revenue. RR Nagar, with a contribution of 335.72 crore (7.83%), and Dasarahalli, contributing 136.20 crore (3.18%), rank lower. On the other hand, the Head Office

East zone follows Mahadevapura with Rs 710.31 crore

accounts for the least tax collection, bringing in only 36.36 crore, which is 0.85% of the total revenue. Interestingly, of the Rs 4,284.16 crore tax collected by BBMP so far in this financial year, only Rs 56.70 crore has been collected in offline mode while the rest has been paid online mode.

Reacting to the BBMP's tax collection, a BBMP official said, "So far, BBMP property tax collection has crossed Rs 4284 crore by November 30 this year which is the highest ever tax collected record. However, our target is to collect Rs 5,200 crores by March 2025."

However, sources said that despite introducing a One-Time Settlement (OTS) scheme to waive penalties and interest on long-pending property taxes, not everyone has adopted it. Under the OTS scheme which expired on November 30 this year, property owners were granted an eight-month waiver on penalties and interest for unpaid property taxes. Additionally, a 5% rebate was offered to those paying their current year's tax by June. Despite these incentives, only 4,284 crore has been collected so far. An official said, "From now on, BBMP plans to resume collecting property taxes along with penalties and interest. We have issued directives to zonal officers to begin recovery operations including adding penalties."

NGT fine against army unit overturned by HC

Court quashes Rs 2.9 crore penalty for sewage non-compliance, citing lack of hearing; case is sent back for fresh review, with Rs 1 crore to be deposited

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The Karnataka High Court has quashed the Rs 2.9 crore penalty levied by the National Green Tribunal (NGT) against the Madras Engineering Group (MEG), an Indian Army engineering unit stationed in Bengaluru.

The NGT had imposed this penalty due to alleged non-compliance with Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) discharge standards. A Division Bench comprising Chief Justice NV Anjaria and Justice KV Aravind nullified the NGT's ex parte order, observing that MEG was not granted a hearing, which contravened natural justice principles. The matter has been sent back to the NGT for fresh consideration and decision.

"The setting aside of the order and the finding imposing the environmental compensation on the appellant (MEG) are on the sole ground that they are passed without affording an opportunity of hearing to the appellant and thus, in breach of principles of natural justice," stated the Court. The NGT's compensation order stemmed from allegations of lake pollution in the city. The tribunal had initiated suo motu proceedings based on a 2016 news

report.

MEG contested the order in the High Court, stating they were not involved in the suo motu proceedings and only learnt about it when an NGT committee conducted an inspection.

Court determined the NGT order invalid due to MEG not being heard. "Not only are the appellants not a party to the proceedings before the NGT, but they never had an opportunity to put forward their rebuttal or the case in defence of the finding and conclusion by the NGT about their liability to pay the compensation. Even if the appellants could be attributed with the knowledge of the proceedings before the Tribunal, when they were not allowed to put forward their case and they were not heard, their right to challenge the finding and the decision could be said to be remaining alive to be exercised in a court of law," the High Court explained.

The court directed MEG to deposit Rs 1 crore with the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board, pending the outcome of fresh NGT proceedings.

HC clarifies arrest grounds

The Karnataka High Court has clarified that the Supreme Court's directives for providing written grounds of arrest to accused persons under PMLA (Prevention of Money Laundering Act) 2002, and UAPA (Unlawful Activities Prevention Act) 1967, do not apply to offences under IPC (Indian Penal Code) or KCOCA (Karnataka Control of Organised Crime Act) 2000, or any other penal law arrests. This ruling excludes cases involving preventive detention.

The High Court explained that since IPC and KCOCA do not require written disclosure of arrest grounds, accused individuals are only entitled to information as per Section 50 of CrPC (Criminal Procedure Code), which requires communicating the arrest grounds to the accused. The court stated, "If grounds of arrest is to be informed [in writing] as is held by the apex court in the cases of Pankaj Bansal, Prabir Purkayastha, and Arvind Kejriwal in every arrest on any cognisable offence, it would undoubtedly open Pandora's box of interpretation of what could be the grounds of arrest and mushroom huge litigation before the constitutional courts."

Justice M Nagaprasanna made these observations while upholding the arrest of John Moses D, who faces approximately 110 criminal cases for land-grabbing under KCOCA provisions. The court rejected his petition challenging the arrest based on non-provision of written grounds as per Supreme Court judgments in UAPA and PMLA cases.

SMEs face infrastructure woes

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Karnataka State Small Industries Association (KASSIA) said that micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSME) have been facing significant infrastructure-related problems despite playing a crucial role in the economy.

"It is ironic that in a progressive state like Karnataka, over 90% of enterprises, particularly in the SME segment, operate from private industrial areas. These industrial estates lack adequate infrastructure," said KASSIA President, MG Rajagopal.

"KASSIA would like to work with the government in this direction to secure land for developing industrial estates. These estates can be developed either in the private domain or on a PPP (Public-Private Partnership) model. Most of the existing industrial areas/estates need immediate attention for up-gradation of facilities like roads, power distribution network, etc," Rajagopal added.

Emphasising the need to establish new industrial estates for small and medium enterprises, he said, "The Karnataka Small Scale Industries Development Corporation (KSSIDC) has not been able to provide land for MSMEs at an affordable price since the land was acquired by the Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board (KIADB) and transferred to the KSSIDC at their allotment price. We request the government to suitably amend the Land Reforms Act to enable KSSIDC to acquire land directly or else KIADB shall allot the undeveloped land without adding any developmental charges to KSSIDC."

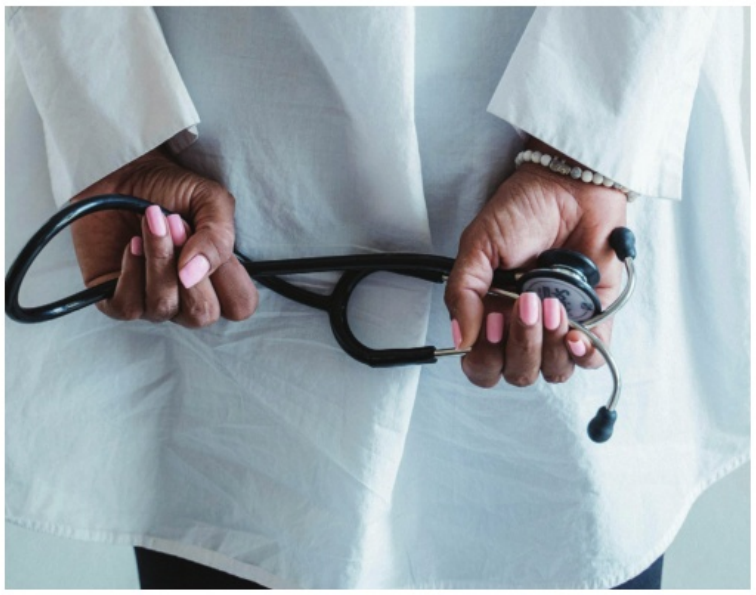
The KASSIA president said at the industrial areas set up by KSSIDC/KIADB, entrepreneurs have been paying service charges to these agencies for maintenance and also are required to pay property tax to the municipal or panchayat authorities. "This issue needs to be solved before formal handover to local bodies by the respective agencies so that the local bodies do not levy any property tax burdening the SMEs. The Property Tax is fixed on the guidance value basis in Panchayat limits. This system is very unscientific since the property owner has nothing to do with the guidance value," he said.

e-Khata issues

The KASSIA president said the state government has made e-khata mandatory for property registration. "Numerous problems are being faced in procuring e-khata and the issue of e-khata to private properties, especially industries. There are no e-khata and B-khata for revenue properties across the state, including Bangalore. Especially in rural areas, 95 per cent of the properties have not been issued e-khata as per the rules and cannot be given either. As such rules are implemented without prior preparation, the Micro and Small Industries in the State are in serious trouble," he said.

Namma Clinics face shortage of patients

BBMP health dept review shows around 10 clinics get fewer than 10 patients in a day; Roopena Agrahara clinic is exception



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The Namma Clinics, which were launched by the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike with much fanfare, have been facing a lot of issues since their inception. With a lack of medicines and doctors, now the latest news is that the patients hardly head to Namma clinics. For example, around 10 clinics are seeing fewer than 10 patients per day on average.

According to a review conducted by the BBMP Health Department, several clinics in areas like Bommanahalli, Mahadevapura South and East zones are underperforming. For instance, the Namma Clinic in Talaghattapura, RR Nagar, has seen just one patient per day on average over the past seven months, with a total of 203 visits in the period, averaging 29 visits per month. Other clinics, such as the Bommanahalli RBI Layout clinic, averaged only 9 patients per day, while the clinic in Vinayakanagara saw just 6 patients daily. In some locations like the Mahadevapura Doddanekundi, Chikkapete (South Zone), and the Yelahanka Amruthahalli, the patient count was also found to be low, with only 5 to 7 patients per day on average.

> **“BBMP has increased the salaries of clinic doctors by Rs 60,000 and is also improving the facilities at the clinics** – Official

Only one exception

However, the only exception is the Namma Clinic in Roopena Agrahara, Bommanahalli, which consistently sees more than 50 patients per day, with an average of 53 visits daily. Additionally, 63 clinics see 10-19 patients, 106 clinics see 20-29 patients, 29 clinics see 30-39 patients, and 13 clinics have 40-49 patients per day.

Steps for improvement

Sources said that the BBMP has stated that low patient numbers at some clinics were due to a shortage of doctors. “To address this, new doctors have been appointed to the underperforming clinics, and where the patient count remains low, staff changes have been made. Furthermore, the BBMP has increased the salaries of clinic doctors by Rs 60,000 and is also improving the facilities at the clinics. Measures include the installation of essential equipment like fridges, CCTV cameras, and LED TVs for better service delivery,” said an official.

Expansion of Namma Clinics

In addition to these changes, the government has ordered the opening of new Namma Clinics in all 27 assembly constituencies under BBMP jurisdiction. The government is also upgrading several health centres located in prominent areas like Vidhana Soudha, Health Soudha, High Court, City Civil Court, and MS Building into Namma Clinics, further expanding the reach of these services across the city.

Attempt to arrest activist condemned

Civil society groups note cops from Delhi came to arrest Khan at home without warrant/notice

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Bahutva Karnataka, Campaign Against Hate Speech, People’s Union for Civil Liberties—Karnataka, among other organisations have condemned the attempt to arrest activist Nadeem Khan from Bengaluru. Nadeem Khan is the national general secretary of the Association for Protection of Civil Rights, a national-level organisation working to uphold human rights.

The organisations noted that on November 30 at 5 pm, four police personnel including the SHO of Shaheen Bagh Police Station in Delhi, came to a private residence in Bengaluru where Nadeem Khan was staying and attempted to detain him without any warrant or notice. They alleged that from 5 pm till 9 pm, the police sat in the hall of the first floor of the house and coerced Nadeem to come to Delhi “voluntarily” with them under “informal custody.” This was purportedly for an investigation in an FIR filed that very afternoon in Delhi.

“For nearly six hours, they continued to harass and intimidate Nadeem Khan and members of his family, as well as trespass on the residence of his brother in Bengaluru. It was only at 10.45 pm, after 5.45 hours of badgering Nadeem, that the officials passed a notice under Section 35(3) of BNSS, asking him to appear at the Shaheen Bagh Police Station,” the organisations said in a statement.

The offences under the FIR are under Sections 196, 353(2), and 61 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. The punishments for all the said offences are less than three years. As per the Supreme Court judgement in Arnesh Kumar v State of Bihar, as well as Section 35 of the BNSS, the law prevents Nadeem’s arrest arising out of the current FIR since the punishment is less than seven years.

The organisations noted that such incidents pose serious implications for the federal system and the division of powers with the use of the Delhi Police by the Central Government. “In this case, the Shaheen Bagh SHO, in complete violation of the guidelines laid down by the Delhi High Court in Sandeep Kumar v NCT of Delhi, did not even intimate the Karnataka Police,” they said.

> **“The message sought is that any criticism of the government, however slight, will be punished by operationalising the criminal legal framework** – Activists’ group

The groups noted the basis of the FIR is that Khan was involved in putting up an exhibition highlighting recent incidents of hate crimes and speeches in India.

Khan files complaint

Meanwhile, Khan and his family have filed a complaint under the Sampigehalli police station on Saturday against the Shaheen Bagh police after alleged misconduct by them during the arrest procedure.

The family in the complaint alleges that the Shaheen Bhag police forced Khan to accompany them while he was trying to convince the police that he would appear before them once he returned to Delhi for questioning. The family also alleged that no procedure was followed.

“We have received the complaint and are looking into it,” the police officials said. **— BMB**

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar interacts with Jayanagar Assembly Constituency BJP MLA KC Ramamurthy at Kadlekai Parishe

Growing peanuts

During the inauguration of Kadalekai Parishe, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said, “We have been growing peanuts for a long time. I have also grown peanuts in our lands as well. Peanuts are poor people’s almonds, and they are used in various dishes in various parts of Karnataka. Farmers around Bengaluru are doing a great job of keeping up the tradition of agriculture and fairs. We all must strive to take kadlekai parishe to a global level. We have cancelled the tax collection this year to help farmers and traders. Kadle kai parishe will be a tax-free event from now on.”

Slamming corruption

Amid buzz that Chief Minister Siddaramaiah might shuffle his cabinet and Excise Minister RB Thimmapur could be shown the door over corruption allegations, the latter isn’t taking things lightly. Recently, Thimmapur expressed his frustration, telling reporters, “There’s a lot of gossip going around about me, but let me tell you, the corruption among some ministers and officials has reached such levels that even I’m fed up. The system is completely broken and needs fixing. If things stay the same, criticism is bound to follow. I’m fighting corruption and working for a better system. In my department, we’re striving to ensure governance is corruption-free.”

Utmost dedication

How far would teachers go to get students into government schools? Well, in the historic town of Chitradurga, they’re taking it to the next level. At the Government Urdu Model Higher Primary Boys’ and Girls’ School, teachers are literally footing the bill for auto-rickshaw fares out of their own pockets to ensure that students make it to school. Why? Because the school doesn’t have the budget to cover transportation, and public transport options are pretty much nonexistent. Teachers are the ones organising the autorickshaw rides—three trips in the morning to pick up students and three in the evening to drop them off. Now that’s what you call dedication.

Chasing touts

The drama unfolded on Wednesday when Lokayukta police swooped down on the Regional Transport Office (RTO) in Tumakuru city and the Assistant RTO in Madhugiri, leaving the offices scrambling. Adding to the action-packed day, two middlemen were caught trying to flee the Madhugiri RTO office but were chased down and taken into custody on the street. They were later returned for questioning, while another individual was released after interrogation. Sources reveal that the probe, which includes records scrutiny, will likely continue until Thursday morning. The raid came hot on the heels of mounting complaints from the public about irregularities at the RTO.

Ministerial ambitions

Magadi MLA HC Balakrishna is no stranger to the political game. Balakrishna’s hunger for power hasn’t waned. In a bold statement, he’s now eyeing a spot in the next cabinet reshuffle. “Had I been in the police service, I would have been promoted to DySP in 35 years. I expect the same promotion in the cabinet reshuffle. The Chief Minister and Deputy CM have personally assured me,” he says, unapologetically expressing his ambitions. The Magadi MLA also made waves recently by stating that his hard work during the Channapatna by-election hasn’t gone unnoticed. “Everyone has seen my effort. The high command is aware of the hard work I put in,” he boldly declared, making his ministerial aspirations public.

— Sridhar Vivan

Drenched Sunday

The city witnessed incessant showers on Sunday. This is in the aftermath of Cyclone Fengal, which made landfall on the coasts of Tamil Nadu and Puducherry on Saturday. As the storm moves westward, heavy rainfall is expected in parts of Andhra Pradesh now

PICS: KAUSHIK JN

'Don't let Freedom Park become graveyard for protests'

Civil society groups, activists call for withdrawal of order that confines protests to one venue and restricts citizens' right to assembly and free expression

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Horaatada Hakkigagi Janandolana, a coalition of trade unions, women's rights, queer rights, slum and Dalit organisations, civil liberties groups, convened a significant round table conference to demand the withdrawal of the Licensing and Regulation of Protests, Demonstrations, and Protest Marches (Bengaluru City) Order, 2021, on Saturday. This order confines protests to Freedom Park, thereby undermining citizens' constitutional rights to assembly and free expression.

Since its inception in August 2023, the coalition has campaigned relentlessly against this restriction. Aakar Patel, writer and thinker, spoke of the fundamental nature of free speech and peaceful assembly, emphasising their role in safeguarding marginalised communities.

He criticised the state's paternalistic approach, stating that requiring a "licence" to protest transforms a fundamental right into a privilege. Patel said, "Jantar Mantar in Delhi has become a graveyard for protests" and warned against allowing Bengaluru's Freedom Park to meet a similar fate." He urged authorities to prioritise traffic solutions, such as pushing towards better public transport, instead of restricting protests.

Akkai Padmashali, an activist, addressed the intersections of caste, gender, and sexuality in the fight for justice. Reflecting on past protests like the "Right to Love" movement, which did not require permissions to access constitutional spaces such as Town Hall, she called out the erosion of such freedoms. Akkai posed a poignant question: "If someone looks at my breasts in the wrong way, should my justice lie only with the courts and nowhere else? Similarly, when a judge makes a sexist comment, where do we go for justice then?" Her words highlighted the necessity of public protests to challenge systemic oppression.

The round table conference of Horaatada Hakkigagi Janandolana

> **"Protests are about holding someone's hand and standing with them in solidarity. We demand the right to protest because injustice demands it**
>
> –Du Saraswathi

Du Saraswathi reflected on the power of large-scale movements like the CAA and farmers' protests in preserving democracy. She criticised the hypocrisy of those inconvenienced by protests, asserting that such minor discomforts pale in comparison to the loss of constitutional rights. Quoting Gandhi, she reminded the audience of the moral strength required for protest. Saraswathi declared, "Babies dying in Palestine should affect me, deaths in Manipur should affect me, and the farmers' struggles should affect me. Protests are about holding someone's hand and standing with them in solidarity. We are not insane for protesting, we demand the right to protest because injustice demands it."

Mavalli Shankar, State Convenor, Dalit Sangharasha Samiti highlighted how the space for protests has been shrinking. He said, "We are fighting for our Constitution and Praja Prabhutva (democracy) because successive governments have suppressed our voices. They keep pushing protests further away from Vidhana Soudha to KR Circle, from there to Bannappa Park, and now Freedom Park. How long will we keep retreating? Leaders like Nanjundaswamy once held protests at Vidhana Soudha's steps, and we stood outside the High Court to make our voices heard. But now, Freedom Park has become a strange spectacle, where dissent is silenced, and all you hear is dikhara dikhara of different groups, all gathered there."

Prof. Babu Mathew addressed the Constitution being built on certain basic features, including the freedoms enshrined in Article 19. Among these are the rights to freedom of speech and expression, peaceful assembly, association, movement, and residence. He said that for the constitution to survive, these rights have to be protected and the Licensing order 2021 is a violation of all these rights.

Responding to the speakers, Naganna, trade unionist from Mandya, said that these kinds of restrictions are in place in districts other than Bengaluru as well. He said that in several districts protests have been prohibited outside the DC office.

The janandolana has demanded an immediate withdrawal of the Licensing Order restricting protests to Freedom Park, restrictions on protests across the state to be lifted, and the State Government to withdraw all FIRs criminalising dissent and peaceful protests.

Businessman loses ₹5 crore to film con

RMC Yard police are searching for a conman, Arun Rai, and his associates, who allegedly cheated a businessman from Bantwal of over ₹5 crore by posing as a Kannada film producer.

According to the police, Rai met the victim at a hotel months ago, claiming to run multi-level businesses, including film production and investments in India and abroad. He convinced the businessman, who had suffered a ₹25 crore loss during covid-19, to invest in his ventures, promising high returns and a share in profits from an upcoming film.

To appear credible, Rai showed the victim prominent commercial properties, claiming ownership, and boasted about investments in Dubai, Malaysia, and state government projects. The businessman borrowed over ₹5 crore from friends and family to invest but realised he had been duped when Rai disappeared and became unreachable.

The RMC yard police have registered a case of cheating and are working to trace the accused. –BMB

388 cases in special drive

The traffic police (east division) conducted a special drive targeting certain types of traffic violations and booked 388 cases against motorists and drivers and fines amounting to ₹1.94 lakh were collected.

The drive, aimed at addressing common traffic offences, saw offenders penalised for actions such as driving against one-way restrictions, no-entry violations, wrong and footpath parking, riding on footpaths, using mobile phones while driving, riding without helmets, and triple riding.

Police said such awareness drives will continue. –BMB

ISRO to launch ESA's Proba-3 mission on Dec 4

ISRO's trusted workhorse Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) will blast off from Sriharikota spaceport in Andhra Pradesh on December 4 carrying ESA's Proba-3 mission, the Indian space agency said on Sunday.

The European Space Agency's (ESA) Proba-3 Mission is happening in collaboration with ISRO's commercial arm NewSpace India Limited (NSIL).

"This mission will place ESA's PROBA-3 satellites (550kg) into a unique highly elliptical orbit, reinforcing PSLV's reliability for complex orbital deliveries," ISRO said in a post on 'X'.

According to ISRO, the satellite will take off at 4.08 pm on Wednesday.

The ESA said Proba-3 is the world's first precision formation flying mission. It will study the solar corona, the outermost and hottest layer of Sun's atmosphere. **PTI**

ISKCON Bengaluru requests Centre to work with Bangladesh to protect minorities

PIC: KAUSHIK JN

ISKCON Bengaluru President Madhu Pandit Dasa on Sunday expressed concern over the violence against Hindus in Bangladesh and urged the Centre to work with neighbouring countries to protect the rights of minorities in the region.

Speaking at a peaceful Sankirtan organised at the Hare Krishna Hill to show solidarity with the persecuted minorities in Bangladesh, Dasa said, "We have come across disturbing reports about the violence against Hindus in Bangladesh. We are deeply concerned about the situation and expect the Government of Bangladesh to ensure the safety of Chinmoy Krishna Prabhu, ISKCON devotees, and all other persecuted minority communities."

"We also request the Government of India to work with our neighbouring countries to protect the rights of minorities in the region."

Describing the event, Dasa stated that the Sankirtan at the temple was organised to express ISKCON's support and solidarity with the victims and to pray for their well-being.

He highlighted that in recent months, the Hindu community has faced attacks in Bangladesh, including the recent arrest of Chinmoy Krishna Das Brahmachari, the spokesperson of the Bangladesh Sanatan Jagaran Manch and a prominent devotee leader, by Dhaka police. **PTI**

66 trees for a service road?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Notably, a MoU was executed between IAF and NHAI in June 2023 for the transfer of land from the Air Force campus to NHAI for construction of a service road on both sides of National Highway 7.

Permission has been sought to remove 66 trees, including Tamarind, Ashoka, Neem, Jamun, and Sandalwood, apart from others.

Not a good idea

Experts say removing trees for one event is outrageous, given the tremendous loss of green cover the city has already experienced.

"Axing so many trees to ease traffic for the aero show is exorbitant. Bengaluru is losing its green cover at an unprecedented rate. It is ironic that permission seeking the removal of trees for an annual event is being sought by agencies such as NHAI.

The Tree Expert Committee should intervene and dismiss the application," said a city-based tree activist.

Similarly, an application seeking permission to remove 103 trees was also filed by KC General Hospital for the construction of a new building on the premises of the hospital.

According to a government order, permission has been granted to the public hospital for a building with maternity.

Buildings to be constructed include a mortuary, modern kitchen, laundry, and bio-medical waste buildings apart from the maternity ward building. Trees required to be removed include Ashoka, Mango, Jackfruit, and Mulberry, apart from others.

'Those who resisted were locked up, tortured'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

illegal call centre. The Indian Embassy intervened and rescued him from the clutches of the scammers.

The ordeal

According to the victim, Tauseef Hussain, the scammers assigned tasks that included making fraudulent calls and sending messages, often coercing the workers and denying them food. He said, "The scam network leaders demanded that we complete tasks such as using the mobile numbers they provided to scam people. Those who resisted were locked up and tortured." The escape was made possible when locals advised the trapped youth to report their situation to the Indian Embassy. Acting on an emailed complaint, the embassy rescued 10 individuals, including five from Mumbai, one from Bengaluru, and four from Mysuru.

12-hour workdays

The victims were forced to work 12-hour shifts, engaging with over 30 mobile numbers daily. Their primary task was to chat in Hindi and English via WhatsApp, but Kannada speakers were specifically targeted to defraud Kannadigas. One victim, Mohammad Ubaid, said, "Our job was to trap people into fraudulent schemes, often by posing as young women to lure men into investing in fake stock markets."

How the scam works

The Kannada-speaking youth are used to build trust by conversing in Kannada and then persuade victims to invest in fake stocks or intimidate them into paying money online.

A police official advised that anyone considering overseas jobs must thoroughly verify the details to avoid falling into such traps. "The promise of lucrative salaries abroad is often a façade to exploit vulnerable individuals. Cybercrime networks are a global menace. It is crucial to exercise caution and verify job offers abroad," an official said.

Mohammad Ubaidullah, one of the rescued victims, shared, "We fought back and managed to alert the Indian Embassy, which eventually rescued us. In the call centre, we had no freedom to contact anyone or escape the situation."

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CHANGE OF NAME

I, LAKSHMIPATHI DEVANGAM GAURIBIDANUR S/o Jayashankarappa D N R/o Mangala Vidhya Mandira Pakka Karenahalli, Dodballapura Bengaluru-561203.I have changed my name to LAKSHMIPATHI DEVANGAM JAYASHANKARAPPA vide affidavit dated: 27/11/2024 Before Notary B M Chandrashekar Bangalore.

I Bukhari Budamiya Syed Ameer S/O, Saifuddin Bukhari Syed R/o #60/5 3 Main 3 Cross Yediyur Jaynagar 6 Block Bangalore 560070 have changed my name to Bukhari Budamiya Syed Ameeruddin.

I, Pratik Aggarwal S/o Surendra Kumar Agarwal R/o Flat W21-701, Shriram Summitt, Electronic City Phase 1, Bengaluru - 560100 have changed my name to Pratik Agarwal for all purposes.

I, Manohar K Sukhasare R/o #21,3rd Cross,2nd Main,bsk 5th Stage, Bikasipura, Bengaluru-560078 have changed my minor son's name from Sukhasare Samendu to Samendu Manohar Sukhasare.

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HEALTH TIP: Fenugreek, commonly known as methi seeds, is an excellent source of fibre and antioxidants

Black pepper contains the compound piperine that eases off the digestion process

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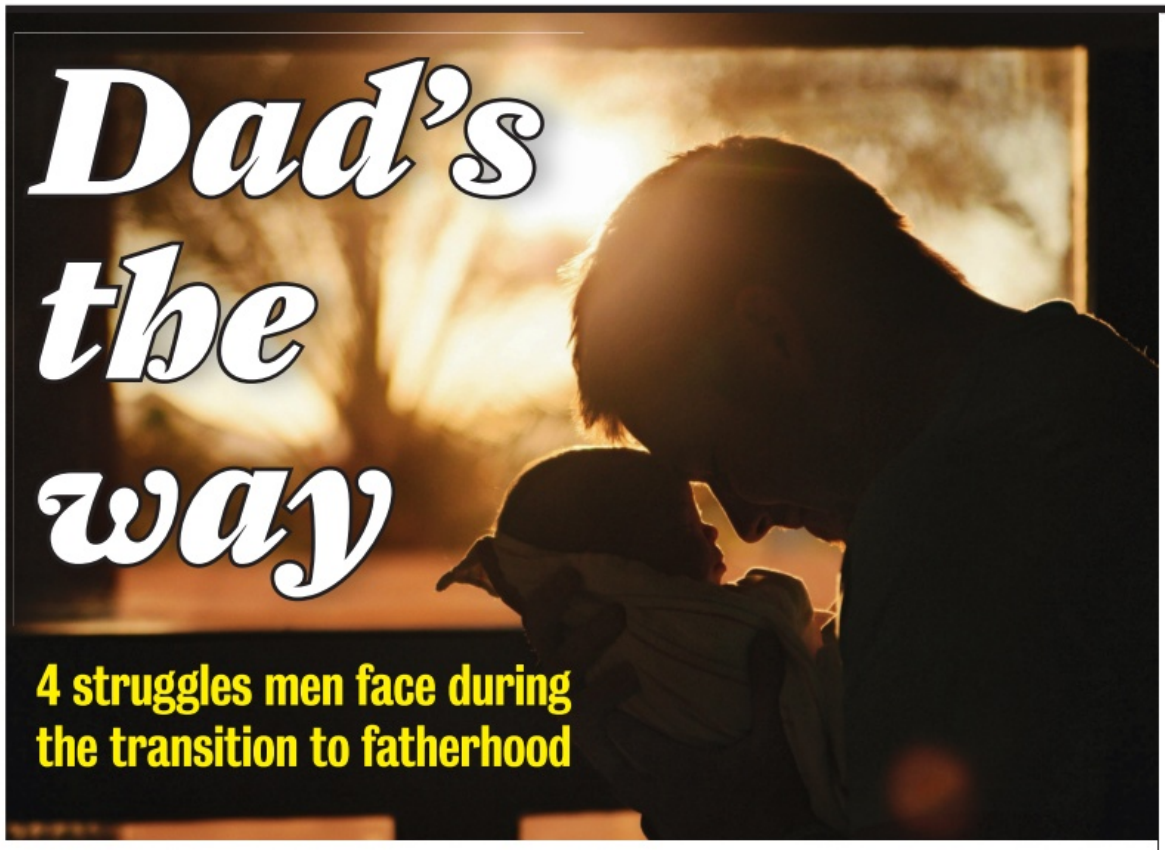
Dad's the way



4 struggles men face during the transition to fatherhood

Becoming a father can be a daunting life transition which, for many men, can be a stressful and isolating experience. Yet, fathers often lack access to support and information to help them cope during this transition. This is significant, as without support, it may increase a father's risk of developing mental health problems – such as postnatal depression, which affects one in ten UK fathers.

To better understand the struggles that men experience during the transition to fatherhood, we conducted a global review of the available evidence on fathers' mental health and wellbeing. We included 37 different studies in our review. These studies used a number of different approaches – including in-depth interviews, phone discussions and online surveys.

While some fathers had a positive experience during the fatherhood transition with no impact on their mental health, others found this period more challenging. Based on these findings, we were able to identify four key struggles men experienced when becoming a father.

1. Changed relationship with their partner

Many fathers struggled with the change and sometimes loss of their romantic relationship with their partner. The overwhelming demands that came with becoming a father, such as exhaustion and new parenting responsibilities, left little time for leisure and intimacy. The transition created a division between some couples that led to poor emotional wellbeing for fathers.

Some fathers also expressed struggling with feeling left out of the relationship the mother and infant had. One participant even described feeling like "my child is my partner's child". Another reported they felt "secondary" throughout the transition into parenthood. This feeling of exclusion started early on in pregnancy, where they felt like bystanders, and continued after birth. Fathers sometimes reported that their partner prevented them from being involved due to their partner's heightened expectations and protectiveness. This undermined their confidence and ability to parent.

> **While some fathers had positive experience during the transition with no impact on their mental health, others found this period more challenging**

2. Confusion over the fatherhood role

Many fathers felt confusion over what was expected of them.

Many participants said they weren't certain whether they should be adopting a more traditional "breadwinner" role, or a more modern caring protector role after becoming a father. Most fathers thought both roles were important, but found trying to balance financially supporting their family and spending time with them to be overwhelming and a "non-stop-ness of stress".

Cultural background played a role here, with some fathers of diverse ethnic backgrounds feeling that financially supporting the family was of the utmost importance and caring for the child the mother's responsibility.

Fathers experienced struggles and confrontation sometimes with their parents and in-laws on how to raise their child due to a generation gap. Many parents and in-laws pointed fathers to a more traditional parenting role, which sometimes caused disagreements. Advice from parents and in-laws was sought more willingly from fathers of non-westernised cultures due to the importance of "co-ordination with the family".

3. Feeling forgotten and undervalued by health professionals

Certain fathers felt excluded and isolated by doctors and nurses during antenatal and postnatal consultations and appointments. One father even shared that "the midwife drew the curtain around me". Some fathers also experienced degrading humour and attitudes from healthcare staff. One father said health professionals he'd been in contact with had "the mindset of treating you like you're a bit of a tool" and laughed at him, saying "look, dad's struggling". These experiences caused fathers to feel "unwanted and alienated" – being considered a "passenger" in the transition to fatherhood.

Fathers also felt there wasn't enough tailored information or antenatal support that addressed their needs.

4. Struggling alone

Fathers across the majority of studies included in our review were physically and emotionally tested to breaking point. But many fathers expressed not wanting to admit any emotional struggles within the transition, believing that "as a dad, you should not show weakness".

Masculine ideals and stereotypes played a key role in influencing fathers to not access support – making them feel that needing support was a taboo. Fathers felt there was a lack of inclusive emotional and mental health support available for themselves. As one father admitted, "I try to battle it myself."

Fathers felt they needed more opportunities to talk about these struggles within peer-support groups if accessible – as well as with family, friends and within work settings. This was a way for fathers to validate their fatherhood experiences, find out whether what they were experiencing was normal and find comfort within a stressful transition.

Our research demonstrates the importance of considering the wellbeing of fathers alongside mothers during the transition into parenthood. Providing support for mothers and fathers will assist with a more positive and effective parenting transition.

(By Ashleigh Watkins, Judith Rankin and Ruth McGovern Newcastle University, The Conversation)

MIRRORLIGHTS

Study links hormone therapy drugs to increased risk of heart conditions, blood clots

Drugs used in hormone therapy for postmenopausal women have been related with an increase in heart disease and blood clot risks, according to a study.

Hormone replacement therapy helps relieve postmenopausal symptoms such as hot flushes and night sweats by replacing hormones that a woman's body is not producing enough.

Researchers, including those from Uppsala University, Sweden, said that certain tablets containing both oestrogen and progestogen are associated with a higher risk of heart disease and rare, but serious blood clots, known as venous thromboembolism.

However, tibolone -- another hormone therapy -- was associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular conditions, including heart attack and stroke, but not blood clots. These drugs are available in India. The findings, published in The British Medical Journal, highlighted "the diverse effects of different hormone combinations and administration methods on the risk of cardiovascular disease". For their analysis, the authors looked at 138 previously published studies, involving 9.2 lakh women in Sweden aged 50-58 years between 2007 and 2020, and had not used hormone therapy in the previous years.

Tibolone and oestrogen-progestogen tablets were two of the eight types of hormone replacement therapies that the women were prescribed. National registry data were used to track cardiovascular events over two years, along with other aspects such as high blood pressure and diabetes.

Over the follow-up period of two years, nearly 24,100 cardiovascular events were recorded among the 919,614 women studied.

-PTI

MIND, BODY & HEART

All you need to know about...

Body odour

Sweat it out
Sweating and body odour are caused by sweat glands in your body. Apocrine glands are found in areas where you have hair, such as your armpits and groin. Excessive sweating can cause social anxiety also. Dr Jyoti Gupta, MD Dermatologist, points out reasons for it.

Diet
Try removing overly smelly foods from your diet or pay attention if specific foods make your body odour worse. Garlic, onions, alcohol, spicy foods, caffeinated drinks, etc are a few examples of food that may make your sweat smell more unpleasant.

Too much exercise
Sometimes, too much exercise, especially in a hot environment, can cause bad odour. Exercising in cool environments can help in reducing sweat. Doing exercises like yoga, weight lifting, etc can be more beneficial than doing cardio for those with much sweating.

Medicines
Examples of medications that can cause excessive sweating include prednisone (Rayos) and escitalopram (Lexapro). OTC pain relievers, like ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil), are also a potential culprit. Talk to your healthcare provider about your options. In some cases, they may suggest a medication change.

Health conditions
Thyroid, diabetes, fever of undetermined cause, etc can cause excessive sweating. These should be checked through blood tests provided by your doctor and should be taken under control.

Lifestyle adjustments
You can take steps to reduce sweating like wearing light layers of clothing (cotton) that allow your skin to breathe, wash dried sweat off of your face and body, change out of sweaty clothing to reduce the risk of bacterial or yeast infections, drink water or sports drinks to replace fluids and electrolytes lost through sweating. **- Femina**

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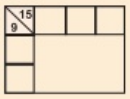
SOLVE IT IN A MINUTE

10(10 × 10)^2−10^3 × 10 = ?

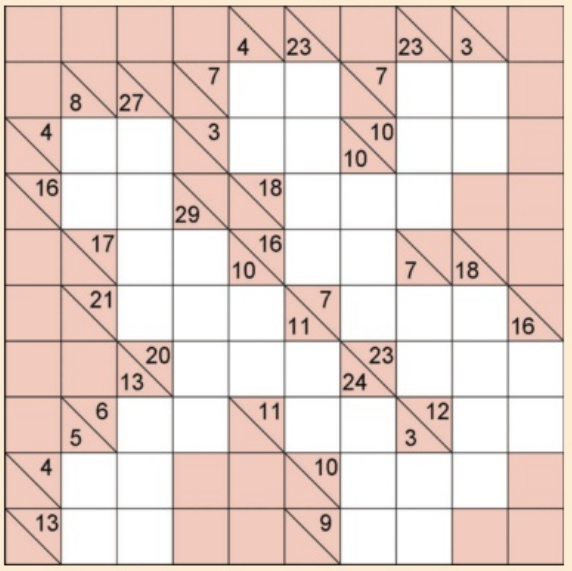
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

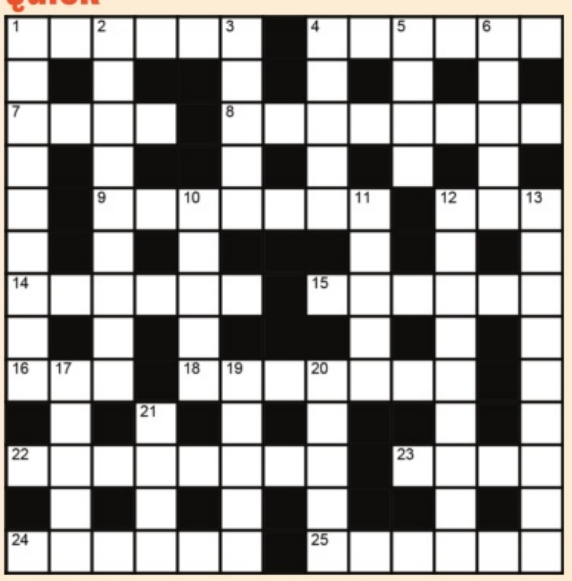


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Small parcel (6)
4 Thick digits? (6)
7 Fork part (4)
8 Nourishing substance (8)
9 V-shaped cuts (7)
12 Tavern (3)
14 Seldom (6)
15 Verdi opera, one of his earliest (6)
16 Any doctrine (3)
18 Capital of West Bengal (7)
22 Amusement park on the Bangalore–Mysore highway (8)
23 Rise rapidly (4)
24 Gentlemen prefer them! (6)
25 Old sayings (6)

DOWN

1 Mixture of dried flower petals (9)
2 Difficult problem (9)
3 Pick-me-up (5)
4 Designation (5)
5 Single entity (4)
6 Southern African (5)
10 Lokmanya ____ : famous patriot? (5)
11 Hindu sun-god (5)
12 Manage in a competent way, in a way? (4,5)
13 Avid readers (9)
17 Reel or bobbin (5)
19 Monsters (5)
20 Australian bear (5)
21 Norse god (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: R EQUALS S

VC UQV GR Q RWIITRR GV OWRGVTRR WVMTRR LT MCATR LGR SCDN.

Linemaro

I like Legos, you like Legos, why don't we build a relationship?

Mind chow

The greatest pleasure in life is doing what people say you can't do

Joke of the day

Two elderly couples meet. Jack: "How are you?" George: "Great! we've just been to that new memory clinic, they teach you how to remember things using word association, it's really good." Jack: "What's the name of the clinic?" George:"Let me see, eh, what do you call that flower with a thorny stem?" Jack: "A rose"? George: "Ah yes, that's it." (Turns to his wife)"Rose, what's the name of that clinic?"

Loop

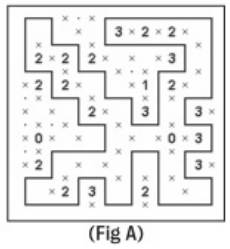
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

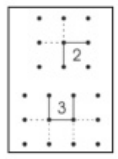
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

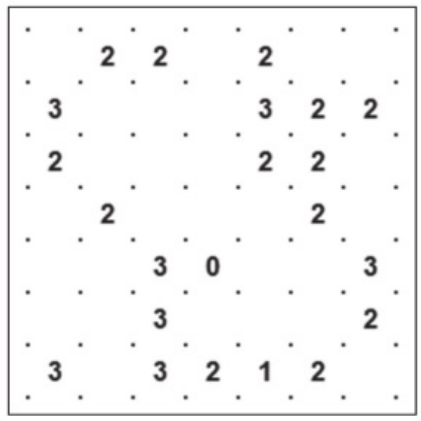
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



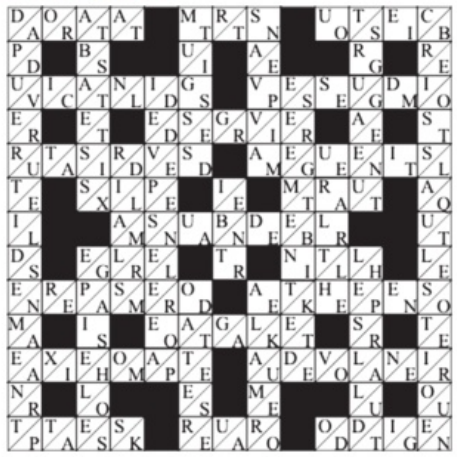
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



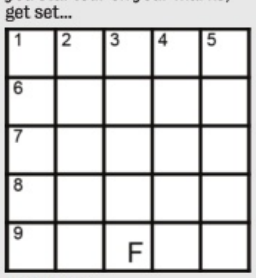
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

1 Pod is; 6 As Ali;
7 Stall; 8 I a mum;
9 I'm FAA

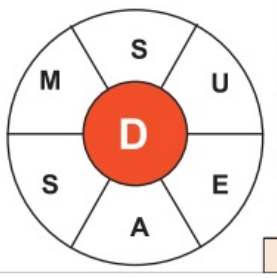
DOWN

1 At mud; 2 Lamia;
3 If pal; 4 Mails;
5 Oasis

Mensapuzzle

What is missing from the last star?

Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

05 Average; 06 Good; 08 Outstanding

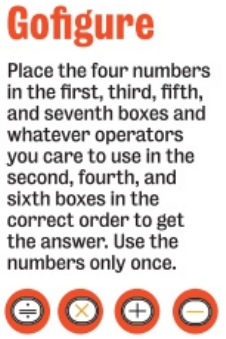
SudokuChallenge

9			3		1			6
8								7
		2	4		9	5		
6	9						8	5
		8		5		2		
2	1						9	4
		4	6		2	1		
1								2
5			1		8			3

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.



Easy = 8
4 5 8 9

Medium = 32
3 7 8 8

Hard = 11
2 8 8 3

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Dollar sign is missing. 2. Purse is longer. 3. Hair is different. 4. Window is smaller. 5. Collar is missing. 6. Line is added to sidewalk.

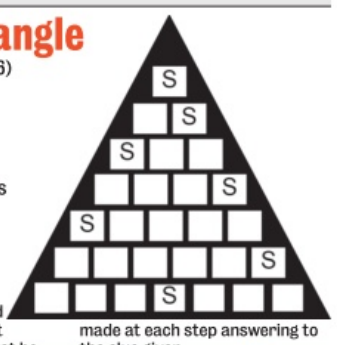
Riddler

Figure out what the trio in each set have in common. Each answer is a six-letter plural word. Example: Railroad, wild animal, music CD: TRACKS

1) Hunting dog, Compass, Scoreboard
2) Dungeon, Jewelry store, Sequence
3) Fish, Sheet music, Dieters
4) Municipal parking lot, Electric utility, Rhythm in verse

Alpha triangle

1 Atomic number (16)
2 _ easy _ a pie
3 Didn't play
4 Small insects
5 Christmas visitor
6 Devilfishes
7 One at the wickets

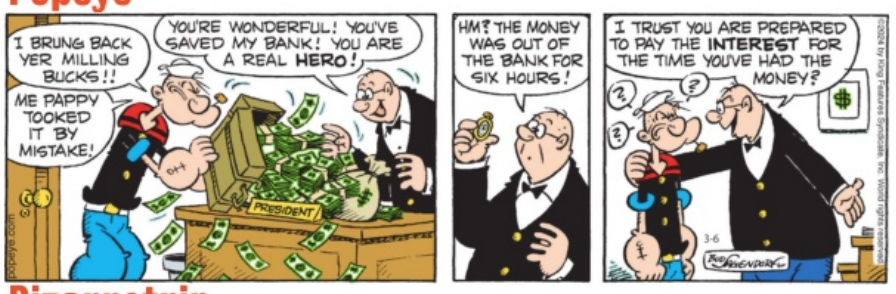


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

Popeye



Bizarrotrip

Diamond Lil

Hart of the city

Crankshaft

Mutts

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today, you are blessed by the Moon, which will make you feel happy. You are polite with the people around you and may make some difficult business decisions with the support of your family members. You are likely to secure a big order through your communication skills, which could lead to business growth.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Today, you are blessed by the Moon. You may feel strong internally and enjoy your work. Romantic moments with your spouse might improve domestic harmony. You are likely to make new plans for a project, and your perfectionism may help you implement them successfully. Job seekers might find good opportunities. Lovebirds are advised to avoid discussing trivial matters.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Today, you may feel disappointed. It is advised to control your arrogance; otherwise, harsh words might lead to losses or strained relationships with those around you. Lovebirds should avoid discussing trivial matters, as it may negatively affect their relationship.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Today, you may experience peace of mind. You might plan to invest some capital in your business, increasing liquidity. Your earnings could boost your bank balance. Romantic moments with your spouse may enhance family harmony, and singles may find a good match. Lovebirds might decide to get married

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Today, you may feel very happy as your losses might turn into profits. Your boss may appreciate your work, and you could experience changes in your role or position, possibly a promotion. You are likely to gain control over opponents and hidden enemies. Lovebirds may make important decisions regarding marriage with the help of relatives or friends.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Today, the Moon brings positive energy. Your health is likely to be good. You might visit a religious place with family or friends and plan to donate to a charity or religious organisation. Property-related deals may be finalised, and you could plan an overseas trip related to work or higher education.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Today, the Moon's influence is negative. You may become a victim of conspiracies, so it is advised to avoid involvement in controversies. Your strong willpower and blessings from elders may protect you from difficult situations. Avoid arguments in domestic life and refrain from reckless driving or adventure activities.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Today, you may be busy at work. Enthusiasm may help you speed up your projects, and your quick decision-making could lead to business growth. You might start an innovative venture in partnership, but investments in fixed assets through partnerships are not advised.

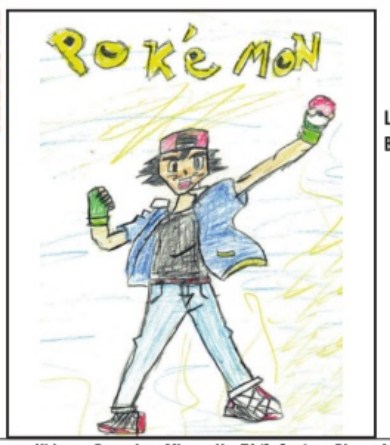
Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Today, you are blessed by the Moon and may perform well at work. Promotions or transfers with financial gains are possible. You might plan to change your current job, and your relationship with seniors will likely strengthen. Old health issues may also be resolved.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Today, you are blessed by the Moon. Things are under control, and you will enjoy your work. Your strong focus and wisdom may help you make important professional decisions. Past investments are likely to yield profits.

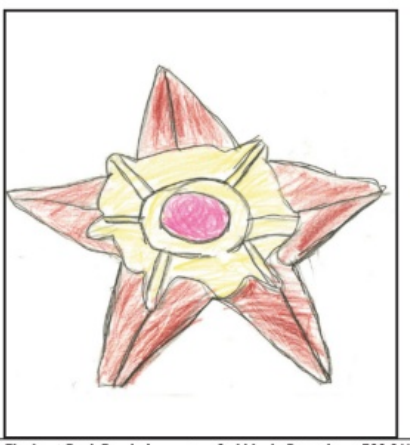
Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Today, you might feel dull and dissatisfied, struggling to enjoy your day. Arrogance could impact your professional and domestic life. A lack of confidence might hinder your creativity at work.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Today, you may feel energetic and perform efficiently at work. Your hard work is likely to pay off, boosting your confidence. Property disputes with siblings may be resolved, and meetings with influential people might strengthen your network. Disputes with your partner may also be resolved.

KIDZONE



Likith M, Bangalore



Lohith, Bengaluru

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SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
$10^5-10^3 \times 10$
$10^5-10^4=$
100000-10000=
90,000

RIDDLER
1) Points,
2) Chains,
3) Scales &
4) Meters

BULL'S EYE
amused, ASSUMED,
dame, made,
massed, mused,
sued, used

FAST FIVE

A	L	I	A	S
T	A	L	L	S
U	M	A	M	I
M	A	F	I	A

STRIKE OUT

A	R	A	T		M	R	S		O	T	I	C		
T	A	S	K		R	A	O		O	D	I	N		
N		L		E	M			L		O				
E	X	E	M	P	T		A	D	V	A	N	I		
M		S		E	A	G	L	E		R		T		
E	R	A	S	E	D		A	T	H	E	N	S		
S		E	L	L		T		N	T	H		E		
T		S	I	P		I	M	A	T			Q		
I		A	S	U	N	D	E	R		L		D		
R	A	R	E	L	Y		A	R	O	L		D		
I	S	M		K	O	L	K	A	T	A		W		
R		U		A				Y		L		K		
U		D		I				U		U		O		
O		N	O	T	C	H	E	S		P	U	B		
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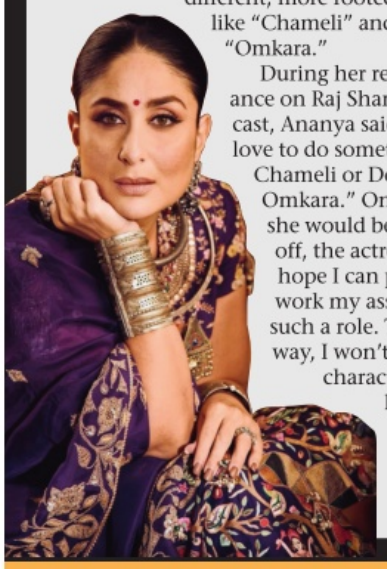
In her shoes

Ananya reveals which of Kareena's characters she wishes to pull off



Actress Ananya Panday has recently shared her aspirations to take on some of Kareena Kapoor's most iconic characters. The actress, known for her urban girl roles in films like "Student of the Year 2" and "Gehraiyaan," expressed excitement at the challenge of stepping into a completely different, more rooted character like "Chameli" and Dolly from "Omkara."

During her recent appearance on Raj Shamani's podcast, Ananya said, "I would love to do something like Chameli or Dolly from Omkara." On being asked if she would be able to pull it off, the actress said, "I hope I can pull it off, I'll work my ass off to pull off such a role. There is no way, I won't do it. Those characters are slightly more rooted, more Indian and it will be different for me too because I've done only Urban girl kind of roles."

In the same interview, the Liger star also spoke about Karan Johar's protective nature towards star kids, revealing that he always strives to ensure they get maximum exposure.

"He (Karan Johar) is very perceptive and very open, and he doesn't want to shield himself, so I didn't think he wants it for any of us, you know. He wants us to be in the real world and get as much exposure as possible," Panday explained.

During the conversation, the actress was even asked if KJo had created a protective bubble around her. She responded, "Not at all. He's the first one to pop the bubble. Instead of telling us what to do, like 'you should do this or that,' he's always there as a strong pillar of support."

On the professional front, 2024 has been a remarkable year for Ananya. Ananya portrayed the role f Bella Chaudhary in the Prime Video series "Call Me Bae." She then took the lead in Netflix's gripping thriller "CTRL."

–IANS

Just for fun

Actress Mrunal Thakur recently took to social media to share a post about catching flights, not feelings. On Sunday, the 'Jersey' actress shared a collage featuring a series of her pictures where the actress is seen making goofy and lighthearted faces, showcasing her fun and carefree side. In her signature playful style, Mrunal added the caption, "Catching flights, not feelings."

In the images, the actress is seen wearing headphones as she strikes different goofy poses in a flight. The Super 30 actress has often given fans a glimpse into her vibrant personality through her social media posts. This latest post is no exception, as she is seen expressing her love for travel.

–IANS

Raha steals the show

Bollywood star couple Ranbir Kapoor and Alia Bhatt were seen cheering for the Mumbai City FC, co-owned by Ranbir, on Saturday, along with their daughter Raha Kapoor.

Mumbai City FC squared off against Hyderabad FC during the latest season of the Indian Super League. As the team owned by her father registered a 1-0 victory against Hyderabad FC, Raha was the one to steal the show with her appearance at the sporting event. The father-daughter duo twinned in blue jerseys. Pictures and videos of the Kapoor family in attendance for the match have now gone viral on social media.

Ranbir and Alia, who tied the knot in 2022, welcomed Raha in November 2022.

Last year in December, Ranbir and Alia revealed Raha's face for the first time at the customary Christmas lunch of the Kapoor family. The moment Raha's pictures and videos dropped on the Internet, they went viral leaving the Netizens in awe. For the Christmas lunch, Raha was dressed up in a white Christmas sweater and a pastel pink coloured tulle skirt. Her outfit was completed with red bellies and white socks.

–IANS

How Nimrat is 'zooming into December'

Bollywood actress Nimrat Kaur recently took to social media to share an exciting video from one of her winter trips, where she is seen riding an ice scooter.

The 'Airlift' actress gave her fans a glimpse into her adventurous side as she embraced the chilly thrills of the icy terrain. In the video, Nimrat is seen confidently riding the ice scooter, navigating through a snowy landscape with ease. She appears to be thoroughly enjoying the unique experience, laughing and relishing every moment. In the first image, she is seen sitting on an ice scooter and striking a pose against the stunning backdrop of snow-covered mountains.

Sharing the post, Kaur wrote in the caption, "Zooming into Decemberrr!!! Jagah guess karo…" A few hours ago, she posted a video of herself enjoying Dosa and Idli while at work.

Earlier, on the occasion of Gurpurab, Nimrat shared a heartwarming video on social media, where she was seen making kada prasad. She captioned the post, "Ghar par banaa Halwaaah!!!! #Gurpurab diyan lakh lakh vadiyaan." In the video, Nimrat reveals that she learned the art of making halwa from her mother.

– IANS

SANDALWOOD SHOTS

Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Activist actor

Journalist-cum-politician Tejashwini Ramesh, who shot into fame after defeating former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda in the 2004 Lok Sabha polls, made her debut in Sandalwood by playing a key character in Lacchi. Now this movie has been selected for screening at 30th Kolkata International Film Festival which is scheduled to be held from December to 11.

Tejashwini was supposed to play the lead in a Kannada movie in 2008 but she could not as she became busy with politics. "I am very happy to be part of Lacchi. I was on the set for around 10 days. It was very tough for me on the day one of the shooting but producer-cum-director Krishne Gowda made it easy. I play an activist who supports a female victim and faces backlash from villagers," Tejashwini said.

Tejashwini said she would consider acting after Lacchi releases at theaters. "I am busy with politics and academics. I am ready to play activist or motivator characters," she said.

After Lacchi was selected for screening at Kolkata International Film Festival, producer-cum-director Krishne Gowda was on cloud nine.

Festival circuit

Actor-cum-producer Gowrishankar is elated at screening of his movie Kerebete at the 55th Goa International Film Festival. The movie, a beautiful ode to Malnad culture, was released at theaters on March 15, but it failed to meet Gowrishankar's expectations in terms of box office collections, but it has received rave reviews from critics. A well-known producer of Sandalwood has bought the Hindi remake rights of Kerebete.

"Only two Kannada movies were selected for screening at the Goa International Film Festival. My movie is one of them," Gowrishankar said.

He said though the movie failed at the box office, it brought him immense satisfaction. "I realised my long-pending desire of making a movie that highlights the culture and traditions of Malnad. I spent a lot of money and time to bankroll this movie. It is appreciated by many people. I am in talks with TV channels and OTT platforms to sell its satellite rights," he said. He debuted in Sandalwood with Jokali that was released in 2010.